

# EMIGRE



(A Magazine for Exiles)

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# EMIGRE

Randy V.

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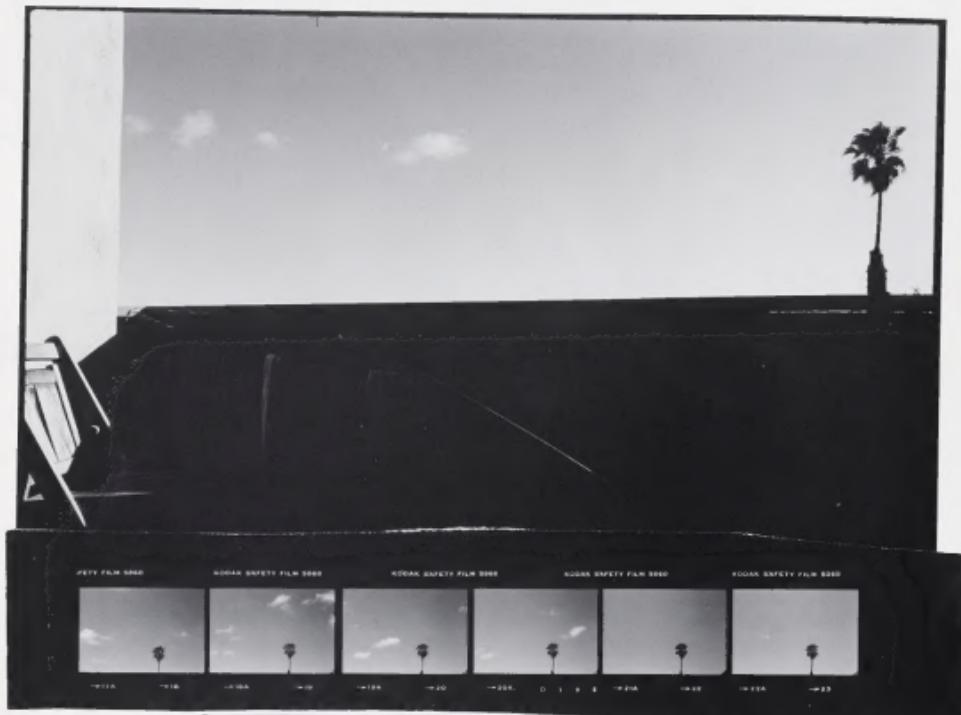
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JUST LIKE I PICTURED IT **RUDY VANDERLANS**

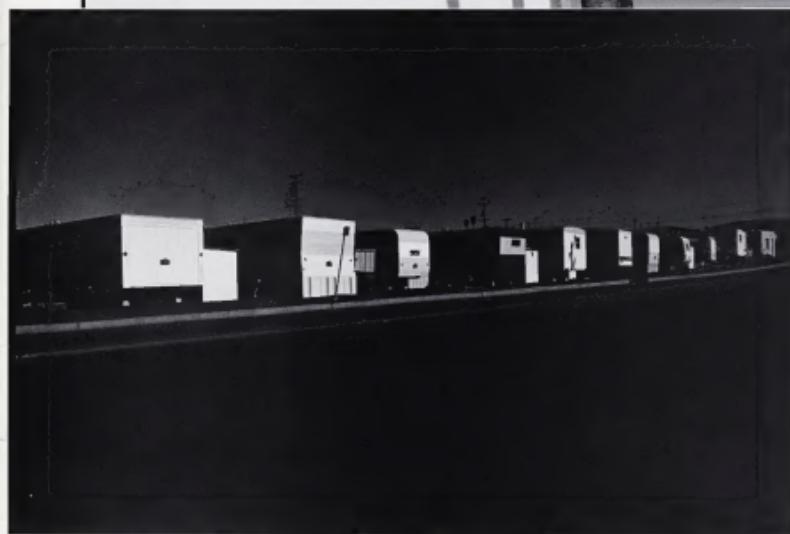


View from balcony, Oakland



Venice beach

*Aust off Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles*



*Trailer park, Mass Bay*



Somewhere Los Angeles



Tony Naylor en Sunset and La Brea



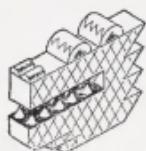
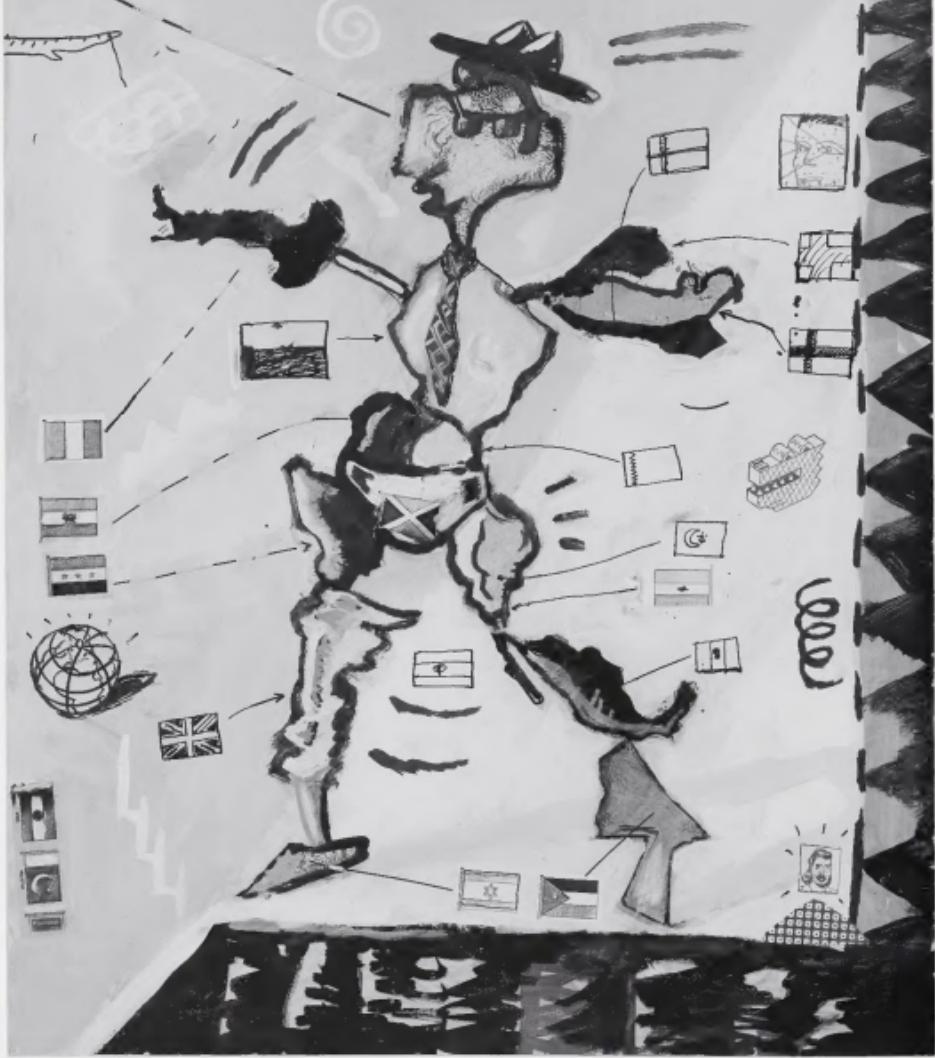


Liquor store on San Pablo, downtown Oakland

Burt Reynolds and Goldie Hawn on Sunset

Sorry folks, no dogs, horses, lions or elephants, beach Santa Monica

IMMIGRANT X



JOHN HERSEY

# Sumo



## The Sport of Major Proportions

by Terry Trucco

Shortly after I moved to Tokyo, I encountered my first genuine sumo groupie. She was a British lady, "neither young nor beautiful," to use her own description, and her devotion was absolute. She had recently moved to a tiny three-room apartment in Tokyo's Ryogoku district, known here as Sumo City, to be near the "stables"—large slat-windowed buildings that serve as combinations of dorms, gyms and cafeterias. This is where the wrestlers live and grapple. On any given day the big men with the bulging bellies can be seen waddling down the streets, wrapped in long blue-and-white kimonos, their long hair caught in neat little knots atop their heads.

My friend's apartment was an exercise in sumo decor: paintings and prints of wrestlers graced the walls. The teacup she handed me was tattooed with the image of Takanosato, one of wrestling's men of the moment. For background listening, we heard ceremonial sumo drum beats taped during a tournament. And for sustenance, we supped on *chanko nabe*, the hearty sumo stew—surprisingly low in calories—wrestlers down by the gallon to build brawn (vast quantities of beer and rice help round out the classic silhouette).

I cheerfully deemed my friend a true British eccentric. That was a year and a half ago. I still don't live in Ryogoku, and I'll pass on the drum beats. But the behavior that once struck me as so extreme seems, well, sensible. I'm a sumo fan, and some of my happiest moments in Japan have been spent piopped before a television set, drinking in every move these mightors make.

Sumo is the sport of major proportions, as the foreign fans here like to call it. Few sports offer so much. In the course of an upper division tournament, or *basho* as they're called, you see flashes of color, ritual and superhuman discipline, of suspense, dedication and exquisite athleticism. There is triumph and tragedy, joy and sorrow, the traditional and the modern. Sumo is a microcosm of Japan and a glimpse of the human condition. It is also great fun. Exotic. Against the grain. In an era when athletes tend to be mean and lean, sumo wrestlers are mean and fat. Every sport has elements of the sublime and the ridiculous; sumo just seems to have more.

I follow the gossip. I knew all about Wakanohana's marital problems, how he abandoned his wife to take up with a bar hostess who did not hesitate to present him with an heir. And I reveled in the news of Chiyonofuji's marriage, sumo's wedding of the year. (Chiyō, as he is called, is sumo's equivalent of a matinee idol; when his engagement was announced, women all over Japan were heartbroken).

I know the statistics. Sumo has helped me master the metric system since I've spent so many hours translating kilograms into pounds. The heaviest man in the top division is Takamiyama—205 kilograms, or 452 lbs., which somehow sounds heavier. He is also sumo's oldest wrestler—he's pushing 40—and its tallest—6 feet, 3 1/4 inches. He is not, however, its best. Little Chiyō, "just" 6 feet tall and 260 lbs. can lick any of the big beefies, providing a charming David-and-Goliath quality. And Kitanoumi, a sociable giant who at 366 lbs. vaguely resembles a brontosaurus, is one of sumo's all-time greats. Now on the brink of retirement (at 30 he seems old and tired), he has won a grand total of 742 fights (and lost just 216). That's five or six matches short of the record.

I play favorites, too. I love to hate a big brute known as Asashio, who is so fat he can barely touch the ground in the traditional sumo warm-up. Asashio, who wins a lot of fights, is from central Japan and attended a school called Kinki University, a nice touch.

Perhaps sumo's finest quality is the window it provides on Japan. If football serves up great insights into the American character, sumo, in what is probably the world's most insular, homogeneous nation, is a cultural textbook. An introduction to sumo is an introduction to Japan.

Like most things Japanese, sumo is steeped in tradition with its origins buried neatly in the past. Known as the sport of emperors, it traces its immediate rules and rituals to the 16th century although sumo in some form has existed here for millennia. While the referees sport 16th-century kimonos that make them look like little clowns, the wrestling garb hails from the prehistoric warfaring days—a bright-colored silk loincloth garnished with neatly starched streamers is all that stands between these massive men and nudity.

In typical Japanese fashion, sumo is for Japanese, and the occasional foreigner who wriggles into the ranks is looked upon with curiosity and amusement, almost like some sort of zoo creature. The mighty Takamiyama, who is Hawaiian, is sumo's most famous foreigner (when he won a tournament a decade ago, then-president Nixon sent him a congratulatory telegram). As in Japan itself, foreigners are welcome provided not too many come and their stay is short. (*Gaijin*, the Japanese word for foreigner, literally means outsider.)

Like the Japanese national character, sumo comprises many layers of meaning. The actual fights are superficially simple to grasp—usually over within seconds, the fight ends when one of these behemoths unbalances his opponent. Yet the subtleties are staggering. As with so much in Japan, the initial simplicity is misleading.

Sumo provides a few fascinating contradictions, too. In a land where the group is elevated and the individual scorned, sumo is fought one-on-one. There are no sumo "teams."

But like Japan, sumo is mindful of its feudalistic past. It is built around an unbending hierarchical structure. Its "warfare" is strict and controlled. Perhaps this is what sumo best represents—in sumo we can sometimes glimpse the last of the samurai.



# T O R Q U E

JACQUES OVERHOFF

**PROJECT** Autopista Sculpture Project 1979 - 1981    **SCULPTOR** Jacques Overhoff    **LOCATION/SITE** Autopista, Hilltop, City of Richmond, California  
**PROGRAM** 40 ft. Landscape Symbol    **STRUCTURAL SYSTEM** Precast, Cast-in-Place, Post-Tensioned Structure    **MAJOR MATERIALS** Concrete, Structural Steel Reinforcement, Ceramic Tiles    **MEASUREMENT FEATURES** The architectural sculpture extends over 40 ft. above the average elevation of the plaza. It is made up of 12 conventionally reinforced precast lightweight concrete elements weighing 10 tons each.    **STRUCTURAL FEATURES** The sections step down from the central "torsion axle" held together with a top and bottom post-tensioned internal steel cable to transfer lateral connections for seismic motion. Foundations and buttresses are cast in place with conventional reinforcements.    **PUBLIC FEATURES** The sculpture is surrounded by a landscaped area for public use. It is a monumental landmark and the area is used for special civic events and outdoor performances.    **DEVELOPER** Chevron Land and Development Company    **GENERAL CONTRACTORS** Jacques Overhoff & Associates    **CONSULTANTS** T.Y. Lin International, Structural Engineers / Peter Greenwood, Project Engineer / McRae - Bylund Architectural Team San Francisco, California    **OWNER** City of Richmond, California



# SUNDIAL

JACQUES OVERHOF

**PROJECT** Sundial Plaza, RidgeTop Park 1977 - 1978   **SCULPTOR** Jacques Overhoff   **LOCATION/SITE** Hunter's Point/Bayview San Francisco, California   **PROGRAM** 500 x 75 ft. Landscape Symbol   **STRUCTURAL SYSTEM** 75 ft. Cantilevered Steel Gnomon Set in Concrete Base (Plaza)   **MAJOR MATERIALS** Precast Concrete, Granite, Steel   **TIMING FEATURE** The sunlight strikes the upper edge of the steel dial. The shadow reads out Pacific Standard Time and Daylight Savings Time on the edge of the 72 ft. plaza, which records the time at five minute intervals.   **STRUCTURAL FEATURES** The dial (gnomon) is 75 ft. long. The 10-ton steel indicator cantilevers 50 ft. above the plaza from its concrete base.   **PUBLIC FEATURES** The Sundial Plaza provides seating in a wind-sheltered amphitheater area for public theatrical performances.   **DEVELOPER** San Francisco Redevelopment Agency   **GENERAL CONTRACTORS** Jacques Overhoff & Associates   **CONSULTANTS** Michael Painter & Associates, Landscape Architects, San Francisco / Chin & Henket, Structural Engineers   **OWNER** City and County of San Francisco, California

# DOWN AND BACK

WORDS AND PICTURES  
BY  
WILLIAM GONG

I MOVED FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO L.A.  
IN 1980 TO  
ATTEND ART  
SCHOOL....



WESTWOOD, THE SUMMER OF 1982, THE HEADLINE READ:



MY FAVORITE PREMIERES ARE OF WARM  
SUMMER EVENINGS IN THE BACKYARD  
TALKING WITH RELATIVES FROM SCHOOL.



IT'S GOING TO BE A  
HOT ONE TODAY

IT WASN'T HARD  
TO LEAVE.  
THREE YEARS WAS  
LONG ENOUGH.

WE FOUND AN APARTMENT IN  
SAN FRANCISCO NEAR THE WATER.

THERE'S PLENTY OF WORM

THE AIR IS STRANGELY  
INVIGORATING.

AHHH  
AAAHH

I GO KITE FLYING OFTEN.

NO REGRETS.

WISH THEY  
ALL COULD BE  
CALIFORNIA

# SCREENPLAY

THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE

Screenplay by

MENNO MEYJES

With love's wishes  
and hopes for the  
future.

Property of:

Zoetrope Studios  
916 Kearny Street  
San Francisco, Calif.  
94133

1040 N. Las Palmas Ave.  
Los Angeles, Calif.  
90038



\$17.10  
170283

(Another Angle)



100 EXT. MAIN GATE PARIS - DAY

100

Outside the Main gate dozens of destitute children clad in rags [the BEGGAR BOYS] lean against the wall of the city and beg for alms. Many of the Beggar Boys have curiously white complexions.

Amongst the Beggar Boys, two friends DAVID and LOUIS share a crust of bread. Louis' eyes are opaque with blindness.

LOUIS

What do you see, David?

DAVID

The usual... oh, wait. Here is something interesting... I see a young knight with a Crusader's banner, leading a white horse, and the most beautiful girl I have ever seen... and a boy with a magnificent falcon...

The Beggar Boys stare at the Children. David continues to describe them to Louis, who smiles and nods.

CUT TO

101 EXT. MAIN GATE - PARIS - DAY

101

Visibly disturbed by the sight of the BEGGAR BOYS, the CHILDREN enter the main gate.

(CONTINUED)

VHS/ALL

-49-

101 CONTINUED:

101

In the shadow stands a SINISTER FIGURE wrapped in a cloak. As he drops the cloak from his face, we see that it is the Vatour who was whipped by the Black Prince. He fingers the fresh scar on his cheek.

Near the main gate, TWO BOYS stand locked in a pillory that has been raised on a scaffold.

ROBERT sees the boys in the pillory and hands a piece of sausage to Odo who is in the saddle. Odo divides the sausage in two and leans over to the boys and feeds them.

BOYS

Thank you, Sir.

ROBERT

Tell me, has the English King passed this way?

BOY I

Yes, my Lord, about two months ago.

ROBERT

Do you know which road he took?

BOY II

The road to the south.

The crowds push the Children away from the pillory. Robert shouts over his shoulder at the boys.

ROBERT

Much obliged to you!!!

Shoulder to shoulder, the people of Paris pack the narrow streets. They wear ornate hats, shoes with pointed toes that curl all the way back to the ankle, and gowns lined with silk and fur.

In their black robes, scholars scurry like crows around a corpulent bishop dressed in layers of purple vestments.

The most outragous costumes however are reserved for the arrogant PARISIAN NOBILITY who push and shove their way through the mob while SERVANTS carry their LADIES in litters.

From behind the curtains of one such litter, a YOUNG GIRL smiles coyly at Robert.

CUT TO

VHS/ALL

102 ANOTHER ANGLE

BLANCHE, jealous, frowns.

BLANCHE

Let's not stay long in this city.

ROBERT grins.

BLONDIE

If I were to judge this place by its repugnant smell, I would say it is rotten to the core.

And indeed the majority of the PEOPLE press a piece of perfumed lace against their nose.

But by far the most disturbing feature of this tableau is the use of CHILDREN AS SLAVES. Everywhere from the retinues of the greatest nobles to stalls of the lowest merchants, pale, fragile urchins are used to perform the most back-breaking tasks for their idle masters.

CUT TO

103 ANOTHER ANGLE

ROBERT

(fading)  
So this is how the greatest city on earth treats its children.

CUT TO

104 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The CHILDREN walk through the oldest part of Paris where the huts have turned into alleys and the houses into huts.

They are being shadowed by the TAPOUR. It seems as though they have entered the exclusive domain of the urchins.

Gangs of pale STREET CHILDREN roar through the alleys in strange striking fashions.

104 ANOTHER ANGLE

The children stop to watch a performance.

Under a flickering torch set in a brick wall a sombre, WHITE-FACED BOY plays the viol while a boy and a girl (GIOVANNI and VIOLENTE) dressed in rags, dance a slow stately dance.

MICHEL, moved by the melancholy grace of the dancers, fingers the lining of his jacket and plucks a hidden coin from it.

When the MUSICIAN stops playing, Michel tosses his coin on the cobbles near the dancers' feet.

CUT TO

105 C. U. VIOLENTE

A brief smile flickers across her pale delicate face. Her eyes are made up and a single tear drop is painted on her cheek..

CUT TO

106 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The CHILDREN travel on with the sound of the viol haunting them from behind.

ROBERT

There is nothing for us here but misery and sadness.

Robert helps BLANCHE into the saddle and swings in front of her. ODO watches the urchins around him.

ODO

I wonder why they are so pale.

BLONDIE

Perhaps even the sun favours the mighty.

BAPTISTE, a small boy, no more than ten, walks toward them and brushes past Robert's stirrups.

When Robert glances down, he realizes that the boy has stolen one of his gold spurs.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

Blanche hangs on to Robert as he chases Baptiste on PASHA through the maze-like alleys.

The others try to keep up with them.

With Robert hard on his heels, Baptiste stops by a metal plate sunk into the street and frantically raps on it with his knuckles. Instantly the plate is pushed up from below.

Robert leaps out of the saddle too late to prevent Baptiste from slipping into the manhole, but just in time to prevent him from closing it behind him.

He peers down into the darkness, listening to two sets of quickly descending footsteps.

The others catch up with them as Robert ties up Pasha and snatches a flaming torch from the brace set in a crumbling wall.

With the torch in his hand, Robert lowers himself into the manhole.

The children follow him into the darkness with drawn daggers.

CUT TO

107 INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

By the light of the torch the CHILDREN make their way down a set of worn steps deep into the earth, until Paris lies hundreds of feet above them.

Finally the steps level off and they enter an ancient underground city.

CUT TO

INT. CITY OF CARPHEM - NIGHT

The city is illuminated by the soft flickering light of dozens of torches. It's a Carolingian ruin. (The Carolingian period ran from 751 to 887 and is named after the dynasty's most famous ruler, Charlemagne.)

Stunned, the CHILDREN enter this shadow city under the crumbled victory arch and wander past caved-in buildings and half-standing walls.

(CONTINUED)

S/A15

108 CONTINUED:

Suddenly TWO BOYS dressed in red, their faces painted like demons, leap in their way and spit fire at them.

The Children are momentarily blinded by the flash of the flames, but when they regain their sight the boys have disappeared.

BLONDEL  
(mothers)  
Mother of God  
(she crosses herself)  
What was that?

ROBERT moves cautiously ahead while his friends follow. Suddenly there is a high-pitched screaming as out of the darkness above their heads, swoop figures in white.

The Children duck and cover as the wailing figures disappear. Before they can catch their breath, there is a sound of shuffling feet.

The children turn to the direction of the sound and gape with fear.

A GIANT shuffles towards them over the shadowy street. He wears a cloak that reaches ten feet down to the ground. Suddenly, the giant stumbles and sprawls in the street.

His body seems to fly apart as FIVE BOYS appear from under the cloak and run away while exchanging accusations and punches.

CUT TO

109 ANOTHER ANGLE

MICHEL, relieved, grins.

MICHEL  
They're just boys.

With ROBERT in the lead, they continue.

Suddenly, a cross bolt slams into the rotted wood of the door next to him. He freezes and snaps his head in the direction from where the bolt came.

CUT TO

S/A16

The TOUGH, WHITE FACE OF A BOY staring at him over the sight of a primed crossbow. It is BERTRAS, the leader of the NIGHT FIGHTERS. Bertras wears an eye patch (a narrow black scarf), over his left eye and a second bolt is clenched between his teeth.

The CHILDREN are quickly surrounded by six menacing boys (the NIGHT FIGHTERS) who point their crossbows at them. The Night Fighters are identically dressed in black tunics with puffed out shoulders and an eye patch over the left eye.

Bertras snaps his fingers and beckons to the Children to follow him.

As they walk, they catch glimpses of white, staring FACES behind arched windows and small furtive SHADOWS darting between the rubble.

At the end of the street lies a ruined palace with crumbled columns and cracked marble steps leading to what is left of its once massive entrance.

The Children and the Night Fighters enter the palace.

CUT TO

## III INT. THE GREAT PALACE HALL - NIGHT

III

The CHILDREN follow the NIGHT FIGHTERS into a somber semi-dark hall with a narrow arched roof like an early cathedral. Their footstepso echo over the checkerboard tile floor.

Great wooden statues of ancient, long-haired kings and heroes, their faces half rotted, glower down at them from their pedestals. It's as if they are walking through Valhalla. The palace is deathly silent except for a CLICKING SOUND.

In the middle of the hall, flanked by a pair of flickering candelabra, stands a decayed wooden throne of heroic proportions.

On the throne sits MR MAYOR - a grave dandy in a flea-bitten robe. He has the naught of complexion and his dark eyes are fixed. With his other hand, he coughs dryly into a piece of lace. It is this CLICKING sound that the Children have heard. He is both young and old, ravaged yet beautiful.

55/A17

(CONTINUED)

## III CONTINUED:

On either side of the Mayor stands his CHAMPS. His court is an allegory of the world above. BLACK BOYS pose as proud nobles with ratty mantles draped over sleeveless tunics.

Others represent the clergy, in torn vestments. A BOY DRESSED AS A BISHOP with a blithered goldleaf staff, is playing in tattered trailing dresses, the GIRLS OF THE COURT echo fantastically made-up eyes and tear drops painted on their rouged cheeks.

None of the children are above sixteen except the Mayor. The older ones share his dry cough and all of them suffer from the same white complexion.

ROBERT and the Children stand waiting before the throne. The Bishop rolls the dice and loses. From underneath his vestment he takes a beautiful dagger and hands it hilt first to the Mayor.

The Mayor looks at the Children and rattles the dice. He coughs before speaking.

THE MAYOR  
For orphans in Paris, Heaven  
is below and...

(pointing up)  
... Hell above and no one may  
enter here unless they are

like us.  
(he rolls the dice)  
You have discovered the secret  
City of Orohama, therefore

you must die.

ROBERT  
Your secret is safe with us,  
I came only to reclaim my gold.

THE MAYOR  
How do I know you're not in  
league with Slavers? I would  
like to believe you but I am  
responsible for the lives of  
all who dwell in the City of  
Orohama.

(pause)

55/A18

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

THE MAYOR

(more)

Bertram: Take them away.  
The Mayor resumes throwing the dice as the Night Fighters move to surround the children.

Odo steps forward to the surprise of everyone.

ODO

(in a strong, clear voice)  
Forgive me, Sir, for being  
so bold, but you seem like  
the sort of gentleman who  
enjoys a wager.

The Mayor looks up quizzically.

Odo approaches the Mayor. One of the Night Fighters goes to restrain him, but the Mayor waves him away. Odo reaches into his satchel and brings out three small cups and a white pebble.

HATCH

(pleased)  
Ah, I like this game. What  
is the wager?

ODO

Our lives.

The court reacts. Michel and Robert look at each other.

THE MAYOR

Why not?

Odo places the three cups face down on the table in front of the Mayor. He places the pebble under one of the cups and shuffles them around.

The Mayor watches carefully and when Odo stops, points to one of the cups.

Odo lifts it to reveal the pebble underneath.

The Court applauds while Robert and the Children groan.

(CONTINUED)

## EPILOGUE BY MARC SUSAN

## HOLLYWOOD

**F**ar away from the glamour and glitter - about 400 miles north of Hollywood's film studios and the sunny pools and glossed gardens of Beverly Hills - resides Haydon, a tall, thin, dark-haired young writer from The Netherlands locked himself up in his member apartment to dream up a screenplay about *The Children's Inn*. He lives in a gray Victorian in San Francisco's Haight Ashbury, where peace-and-love buttons and glass bead necklaces have long since been replaced by rape whistles and pocket knives.

For months on end, visions of the Middle Ages emerge from every corner of his dark room living room walls. At night dagger boys, vassards, vassals, knights, princesses, pagans, nymphs and ladies of nobility file by, becoming part of intrigues and romances. Crossbows replace bows; battles clash on the ceiling in the flickering projections from the fireplace. In the daytime sunlight pierces through the blinds and arrows from invaders, and when the doorbell rings his pet dog Boomer turns into a vicious warhound. But Haydon holds his own amidst the pandemonium and keeps writing until the story is finished. For the next script he is provided with an office. He feels relieved it will enable him to lead a easier life - to negotiate dresses from reality and go about his job as an ordinary person. Almost every morning now, he drops his off at the Coppola Building on the fringe of the North Beach district. It is an old triangle-shaped apartment building resembling the bow of a ship left to decay. The paint on the front is faded and blistered and has the color of corroded bronze. Noisy nearby traffic runs by on all three sides, and from a distance the structure appears fragile and is deserted by the lowing milkweeves of downtown highlife. To enter the hall, summons the elevator with a special key, and goes to his office on the fifth floor, in west of the adjoining Foss electric typewriters and telecommunications equipment quietly hum among stacks of boxes filled with film reels and dusty station notes. Haydon's own space is sparsely decorated with mismatched furniture and the walls are messily bare. On his desk lie scattered papers, pencils, pens, a white dinner plate brimming with half-eaten Caviar, and a few other things not worth naming.

As he is about to file his worn black leather jacket over a nearby chair, a thundering noise comes from downstairs. The building starts rattling and howling and white spray of water splashes against the windows. He grabs his coat and snatches everything on top alidem to the floor. A single piece of paper remains behind; in assessment he recognises a note in his own handwriting which reads: "CUT TO SHIP IN STORMY WEATHER - HEADING TO THE FAR EAST."



# DON CARPENTER ONE POCKET



ILLUSTRATION BY **BERT VAN DER MEIJ**

You can get hot playing pool. Shoot-  
ing over your head, shooting the eyes out  
of them balls. The other players will tell  
you that you aren't that good and you  
aren't, but the balls fall into the pockets  
anyway and the cushion acts like you had it  
on a lesson. This is the best of it. You don't  
have to work for anything, you don't even  
have to use up the next shot. You've just  
done it, mastery of the art. None in the  
room. Top Six cross-corner. Thop. Four  
off the twelve nine side. Click them. Gieser!  
Bark! Next.

It can happen to anybody but it's

best when you've worked for it and know  
what it is, not blind luck, but exactly what  
everybody in the poolhalls says it is, espe-  
cially when it's happening to somebody  
else.

Unconscious.

"We're in... we shoot!" is what they  
say. They roll their eyes, chalk their cues,  
raise their courage hopefully and so down  
to waist, because they know they're not just  
playing the other player but also whatever  
force has taken over inside. I don't recall  
ever seeing two unconscious players head-  
to-head and I wonder if it ever happens. It

would be something to see and something  
to talk about.

You can be cold, too. When nothing  
works, the balls swell up and roll funny,  
the pockets move slightly east or west, your  
cushion is hot and your feet are cold and the  
cue is bent, and the instant you shoot you  
know you've missed. Nothing drops but  
the cushion. You might as well empty your  
pockets, you aren't going to win nothing  
today.

Black fever.

Everybody has a theory, but nobody  
knows.

You'd think you would feel good  
extraordinarily good, if you were shooting  
like a master and all your poolhall buddies  
were sitting around watching, even better  
in a strange place surrounded by strangers,  
you've come into this town like a shot of  
penicillin, ready to cure everybody, and now  
you are, the best, and totally anonymous.  
It should feel great. After all, when you're  
lousy and can't hit a ball in the ass with a  
baseball, you feel rotten why shouldn't  
you feel like a king when you shoot like  
one? I don't know. It's a mystery.

A more savage way than learning  
how to knock little red balls into a pocket

is less a mechanical process than a spiritual one, but there you are.

I want to tell about three times when I got hot, and what it felt like

Once in Mobile, Alabama, on my first visit. I was stationed for several months in Mobile, just before the end of the fighting in Korea. I was transferred from Keesler AFB in Biloxi, Mississippi (*Biloxi Mississippi*), only about sixty miles west and I was disappointed. I had hoped to be sent back to California, or short of that, anywhere out of the heat and that terrible southern humidity. The humidity was so bad down there on the Gulf Coast that nearly every day around eleven a.m. it would rise to 100 percent and rain. This would cool things off for ten minutes or so, and then back to the smothering mirage. I hated it.

I had been sent to Biloxi to learn radio code. They wanted to make me into a radio operator and put me into an airplane and send me against the enemy. I did not want this. My mind was made for finer things than to be part of somebody's expendable communications network. Basically I saw myself in more of an advisory capacity, lending my insights to the war effort instead of crouching in a trance somewhere over Korea while the Code ran up my arm and out my ear. We marched to the flightline while a band played; we sat in huge hangars wearing old earphones and listened to DA DA DIT. DA DA DIDY DIT. DA DI DA DIT. DIT DIT DA for six hours and then marched back while a band played.

You worked in pencil until you got to six groups a minute, and then big Royal Standard typewriters. Six groups was crucial. If you couldn't get to six groups they washed you out and let you go someplace else, to be something else. There were rumors, of course, that anybody who washed out would spend the rest of his enlistment doing KP under machinegun guard on some lonesome SAC Base...

Yes, I washed out. I wrote down the letter W for everything that came over the earphones for a week. I complained of having a headache every day for a couple of weeks, and had to be taken to the dispensary in the back of an ambulance each time just to get my APCs. You could not leave code class except in an ambulance, they told us, to keep us intimidated and listening to those DAs and DITs. My headaches were real enough, Jesus, half the guys had them from the fucking code and the hot nights, but I was the only one in my particular group who actually complained enough to get the embarrassing but necessary ambulance run to the hospital, where I would be given two APCs by a psychiatrist and sent back to the barracks to pretend to sleep. Who could sleep in that heat? Anyway, finally after determining through a series of tests that I was not a good code conductor, I was placed on supernumerary status, made to pull night KP every other night, and after a while, reassigned to Mobile, Ala., right down the pike.

I pulled a couple of paydays while I was a supernumerary. The first one I got into a barracks poker game, seven card high low split, two jokers in the deck, and won over a hundred dollars in about fifteen minutes. These dimwits did not know how to play high low split. Every one of them seemed to think he would end up with half the pot just for sticking around. I had been lucky and learned the game in my early teens, playing with a gang of Berkeley kids pot limit table stakes (these kidgames were important once a pal and I went to St. Helena in the hottest part of the valley August and picked prunes on our knees among the dirt clods for three unholly days, making thirty dollars apiece and then thumbing back to Berkeley because we didn't want to tap our stake, and I lost it all, every penny, on the first hand) and so in this air force payday game I just stayed

quiet until I had a hand, and then came out like a madwoman flinging shit; I won and quit and headed for New Orleans, my first visit to the Queen City, and of course I met right up with a couple of tufflashing, ballgroping B-girls who poisoned me with doctored champagne and sent me with my pockets hanging out to the hotel room. I had the dim sense to pay for before entering the bar. I woke up with a sensational hangover, a Mickey Finn Memorial hangover, hitched back to Biloxi, getting there in time to pull twelve hours of night KP, surely the finest hangover cure ever invented.

By the time I pulled the next payday I knew I was going to be assigned to Mobile, and so I put what money I had in the pocket of my civilian pants and hopped the eastbound bus. I was not looking for a pool game. I was looking for whores.

Biloxi, Mississippi, with forty thousand young air force men, had only one whore that I know of. There were rumors of another one, but I never saw her. The one I saw, the well-known, public whore, worked in the Erle Hotel, and I visited her with my Ivy-League friend, John. I remember her as being kind of plump and ordinary looking. My Ivy-League friend got whipsawed by guilt afterward and bored me to suffocation with the news of his betrayal of his body, Princeton, his family, his wife-to-be, his unborn children, etc&etc., and alternately what a great lay the hooker was and how he was going to get her out of that awful business, etc&etc.

But never mind. The important thing is that I arrived in Mobile looking for new faces and only incidentally to scout out my new home town. I had learned by this time that one of the good ways to connect with a hooker was to jump into a cab and ask the driver. Not just walk up to the cab on the cheap, but jump in and let the driver make a buck. (Later I learned an even better way to find the action -- just examine the OFF LIMITS roster posted on the bulletin board outside the Orderly Room -- drugs, whores, gay bars, the works.) But this time I got into a cab off Bienville Square, the driver a heavyset guy with a nice thick red cliche of a neck bulging up out of his Hawaiian shirt, and since it was only about two in the afternoon and I didn't want to end the trip before it started, I leaned back, lit a Pall Mall and airily asked,

"Where's the best poolhall in town?"

I remember the way the guy turned around to look at me. I don't like the kind of fellow who would want to know this information. He probably would have expected me to ask the location of the library, or the university extension center, or the local chapter of the Audubon society.

"Pool hall?"

"Yeah," I said

"What's your game?"

So he was a player himself. *What's your game?* I suppose if I had said, "Oh, I just want to knock them around for a while, maybe play some Stars and Stripes, Rotation, you know," he would have dropped me at the YMCA, overcharged me, and let it go at that.

It wasn't that I was intimidated by the driver. When I went into a strange town in those days I usually tried to find the best poolhall. That would be the place where I could sit down, relax, eat a decent hamburger, have a place to piss and make phone calls, without being thought of particularly as a stranger. There are no strangers in poolhalls, only potential victims. And in most sensible towns, the local Brahmins won't hit on you unless they can see you play. If you take a table by yourself and shoot a few balls, you will slowly gather a certain amount of attention. And after a while, somebody will come over and

watch you, and after a few minutes of this, you'll be hit on. (I hadn't yet been to New York City, where just walking into some of the joints around 42nd Street they hit on you like moray eels even if you've just come in to make a phone call.)

"What's your best game?" That's how they usually put it, variations for localism to one side. What's your best game? Some of the funny ones, like my friend Dick the Motorman from Portland and San Francisco, would say, "What's your road game?" -- not so subtly hinting that you are so good at your game you take it on the road, winning fame and fortune in all the little crossroads towns.

Dick the Motorman. I first met him in a Portland poolhall called The Basement of the Morgan Building. I never heard it called anything else, although I'm sure it must have had a name. This was in 1961, well past the heyday of the Rialto, Benn Fenne's and The Rathole, and all the relics from these three places could be found either in The Basement of the Morgan Building or across the Willamette River in an allnight bowling alley called Amato's, which had, in addition to the lanes, an allnight lunch counter and ten or twelve allnight pool and snooker tables.

Anyway, Dick the Motorman used to beat me regularly at snooker by making me spot him seven points. As soon as I would walk into the joint he would unfold his arms and lean off the empty table he was reserving for our contest, grin and come up to me. "Ready to win some money?" he would slyly suggest. "You're too good for me, Professor, but I just like to play... Maybe fifteen points?"

Somewhat I always fell for the flattery, what the hell was I doing in there anyway, and over the next hour or so he would whip me out of three or four dollars plus the time.

There were giants in those days...

When I moved to San Francisco permanently in 1962 one of the things I looked forward to was hanging out in the big Market Street poolhalls, the Palace Billiards, or Corcoran's, both had managed to survive into the Sixties pretty much intact, big poolhalls where pool was taken seriously and where they had ivory billiard balls, green felt and old men with dark blue suits and grey hats playing their lives out over the polished old wood tables in the emerald light. The first face I saw after I walked up the double staircase into the Palace was that of Dick the Motorman, intently beating up a pinball machine. It seemed to me I had just left him (and the rest of the smalltime) in Portland.

When Dick saw me his eyes lit up.

I gave away five points, and over our snooker game he explained that one Sunday afternoon he and a friend had been going around Portland cashing bad checks in the big Fred Meyer stores, and by the eighth store they had been made somehow, and his partner never came out of the store, so Dick drove on down to San Francisco, 670 miles South. poor Dick. He tried a couple of years to make it as a pool hustler, but time and entropy got to him and he ended up married and driving a trolley bus...pigeons like me don't fall out of the trees.

I got hot once at the Palace Billiards, playing nineball. This is a short form of rotation played mostly as a gambling game, the money on the nineball (sometimes also on the five). To the amateur eye the game looks like slop, but it isn't.

By this time in my life poolhalls were mostly in the past. It was about 1965 or 1966, and with a couple of friends who also liked to remember the good old days of boys and billiards I took a jaunt down to the Palace to shoot some nineball. We all played bar pool in Gino and Carlo's in North Beach, but bar pool is played on little dinky tables covered with knots and

beerstains, and once a ball drops it's down for good, and the cues are warped and knobby, rilly, you could do better with a baseball bat, so the three of us, full of drink and nostalgia, dropped down to the Palace to see which of us was the worst liar and the best player. I had written about poolhalls, and naturally some of my characters were terrific players, much better than I had ever been, but it put a nice edge on things: "Let's see how good you *really* are..."

Bob was a thickset blond guy, a housepainter who had played in all the old Portland poolhalls of my own youth, in fact we hung around with the same gang of kids, the Broadway Gang, but at different times. Bob and I were about a dead match at bar pool, and when we played partners we were very dangerous. I remember leaving Gino and Carlo's one plastered night with eighteen undrunk bottles of Millers on the bar, fruit of victory from a nightlong partnership with Bobby. But we hadn't played heads up and we were not really sure which would have the edge. (When Bob was fifteen years old he and another kid committed some daring crime involving guns, and full of the heat of victory went to Siebel's and bought a lot of flashy clothes, put the clothes on and with guns and money in their teenage pockets went to the best restaurant in Portland, even then the London Bar & Grille of the Benson Hotel. I can see them in their one-button rolls, wine-colored shirts and black knit ties as the sommelier pours a bit of wine into Bobby's partner's glass, and Bobby's partner, intimidated by the restaurant and the sommelier more than he would have been by a squad of cops armed with tommyguns, looked at the bit of wine in his glass and snarled at the innocent sommelier: "Fill it up, motherfucker!"

Bobby left Portland much the same as Dick the Motorman. But with certain differences. Bobby was working for the local version of the Outfit, and so was the police officer who typed up the various warrants to be issued by the Department. When the copy ran across a friendly name, he would call the fellow and give him a sporting chance: "Bobby, we got a warrant for your arrest, dated today, charge of check forging..." Bobby emigrated to California, where he was wafted into the penal system by a similar offense. Makes you wonder

The third player was a former street ape named Lew, with a shady past including not only all the poolhall bum hangabout stuff but also some years in the advertising game and even more years as a poet. We talked a lot of Pool and Poker, but had never played on real tables together. So when the three of us found ourselves together and properly halfdrunk, it was most natural that we try to find out who was bullshitting about having been great as a kid. We couldn't play straight pool, which would have been the real test, because straight pool is a two-handed game, so we settled on nineball. Ten cents on the nine, no fiveball action. Just a sporting match

Nobody was watching our game. The local hustlers were not in attendance. Just the three of us in a dim corner of the Palace, drinking beer and shooting nineball. I don't understand what happened, the one, Bobby, who was used to beating me at everything -- massacring me at chess without knowing the names of any of the gambits, teaching me gin and whacking me out of at least ten dollars every time we would play, and dominoes, Sweet Jesus...

Lew, poor Lew, he had never seen me play anything but barpool; Lew, whose ghost I saw in the no name bar in Sausalito either the day before or the day after he climbed into the Sierra to become a buzzard, saw him walk into the crowded happy hour saloon and looked away so he wouldn't see me because I was already sick of his self-pity and the tears that would run down his face at the least provocation, who

resumed my book on blood sugar with a nose in the front like as at autopsy, "Please let me apologize for the verbiage on certain pages of my book — Love, Lew" — and evenly I washed off his red paint disappearing in the direction of the toilet and out of my life forever. A ghost because the legato was wrong for him so he have been there at that time, and sure, it could have been somebody else who reminded me of Lew just when Lew was about to disappear into the States.

But then there is confirmatory evidence of a sort — I wasn't the only one to see Lew's ghost. A deputy sheriff up near where he had been living wrote he saw Lew alive, standing in line at the bank. But there was no transience in his name. Glomeshow the idea of a ghost standing in line at a bank, stepping from one foot to the other, it is in way a more terrifying prospect of the future than all the natiel chans and sheiks you could manifest... money had always been a big problem in this life. Money, money, when can I make sense each money, I'm sick of holding down some other motherfucker's job, how can I make some fun dough?

In all respects, I don't think the ghost came to us no name bar looking for me. This was Lew's favorite bar, and maybe the ghost had come to take one long last piss in that coil of repose. I don't know Ghost stories...

I won twenty-five games of nineball in a row, Baby couldn't hit shit. Lew couldn't hit his ass. For me it was an absence of effort. Nothing I did was wrong, everything turned out for the best. I would shoot in the blind and pocket the nine. Twenty-five games in a row, Victory Unconscious. Five dollars to the good, I sprung for the bears, but there was a disconcert for the three of us for the rest of the evening, and perhaps on into life last maybe death) because we all knew the truth

I'm not that good!

Nobody's that good

Q How did it feel? How did you feel while you were shooting the eyes out of them bats? How did a feel when the friends you admited and saved their credibility and their poetry, leaned gleefully against the other tables and watched you close house?

A I have never learned humility

Q Yes, but how did you FEEL?

A Actually, I wished they would make an occasional payoff. It was embarrassing. Baby would go up and shoot, see, he would knock in the one, two, three, four, lucky hit on the seven, nine, five Lew would have an easy shot in the corner, the rest of the balls open and waiting. Low would sink the five, six, eight. The nine would bubble in the pocket, a hapless cripple, ten cents worth of buck liver I would chuck up, a tiny apologetic snowflake of blue, step forward, square through my glasses, kiss my face like a flower. I meant to keep my glasses between my eyeballs and the game, shoot, shoot, twenty cent pieces, RACK!

That's how it felt

OR I would shoot the balls whilst, four would drop, the rest ring on the green like Christmas presents. Then, then, then, then, twenty cents please. You practice off your life and the fruit falls into your lap.

Q How did your friends take it?

A Well, they did not exactly call for the reporters. You would think after hearing a man brag for years about what a honker postholder he is, you would be pleased to witness such courageous confirmation, but instead they snorted bored, embarrassed and waiting the evening world end

As a matter of fact, none of us ever mentioned it again. Like seeing a ghost,

When the cab driver asked me what my game was, I could have said I played a little nineball, which would have apped him off that I was at least that far in. I could have said simply, I play all games, and someone somebody will ask you a question which makes you by surprise, and without thinking, you reply with a truth you didn't know was in you:

"One pocket," I said. I'm sure that until this moment and even beyond into the future, I didn't know that my game really was one pocket

We must have been at a soap shop, because I can still remember the cabinet turning his head and looking back at me, his eyes and ears again suffering a morsel of information. I did not look like a fellow who would have even known that the game of one pocket existed

"One pocket?"

"Why, do you play?"

"Yeah, I play pool, but I don't play no one pocket."

His retort popped me open like a cheap suitcase

"Yeah, I play one pocket, straight pool, bank pool, bridge golf, nineball, twelve, snooker, that red."

One thing to make clear right away I didn't think coming from a big city like Portland was going to give me any advantage over the local lads — the bragging was one out of my mouth like the rest of the air, spit and effluvia, part of my normal respiration cycle. I was still a teenage punk when I learned the primal fact of pool — that every crooked hamlet has its sharks and hunters — Wallace Creek, California, Klamath Falls, Oregon — you name it, you can run into people who have never been past the city lines and don't know how good they are, old duffers who can sink sixty kick balls in a row and think everybody can if they'd only try.

I didn't know what to expect in the Mobile, Alabama poolhall except the hope that I would not be as bored and sick with anxiety here in Mobile as I had been in Bens, where they played only rotation and eightball in the service clubs, and on the two deuxième tables in the little bar under the Cork Hotel the hustles was so obvious as to be practically audible, guys with custom Hollywood haircuts and tailored Hawaiian shirts, guys who had chukked up so many times and wasted up so seldom that they have a dark blue spray of suture between the fingers of their forward hand, guys who had mummified the lamps on the table and the necks in the balls and who would follow you out into the steamy Gulf night and beat your skull is to take back the day once you might have latched onto I did not play pool in Bens

Boko!

Forly thousand screens and one hooker. The populace of the town couldn't have been more than ten thousand, counting blocks, and there was down Little Rock around in 1952. Most of the white folks in Bens were boys riping off the air force kids or payday and each other during the rest of the month. I only got into town when I had money and I only had money around payday, and if I had any real money I would head for the hellholes of the Queen City. But there were plenty of niggas in Bens. I ate my first pizza pie in Bens, my mouth surrounded while by League Johns grinded in ice, his knuckles and fingers fisted from the West, and told me about his Princeton literary ambitions, to write little stories about nothing happening and published them in the New Yorker and not have to go to work for the Scott Paper company like his old man

Every once in awhile we would join the swarms on the sandy hills streets of night Bens, forty thousand young whores and one hooker; or we would crowd into one of the bars, the Four Queens or the

Question Mark, and while the forty thousand young voices would babble and scream and yell, John would search me to distract Bens' Sorch and attempt to explain to me about honor and manners and civilities and God, any one of which he would rather die than do without, and I would try to explain to him how I managed to live without these comforts. John was dumbfounded and delighted that I did not know how to cut a stick, and in fact did not even care for thick stick, the goldenrod things were always popping off my pants when I tried to use them open. For John seventeen hours began with a singer followed by a big red Bloody meat, for me this was just a case of candy and grape (Grape, ugh, I have always hated grape — so to me at this same formal occasion of my life seemed to have been marred by a mouthful of unvarnished and basically nauseating grape — where to deposit it? Others did not seem to mind, other places did not have small metal plates of discarded grape on them — perhaps the cuffs of my pants...)

There were new necessities on the base, eight for the students and one for the Permanent Party Personnel, and you flushed your Class A Pass to get into your assigned messhall, whose number would be stamped across the face of the pass along with your grade, in regard to liquor (GMINOS or purple). On night KP John and I (John, son, was a fugitive from the code, but they kept serving him back, no matter what sentence he thought up — the best one was application to become an Officer — they would jerk you right off the flightline for that one, if you could pass the two-hour test.) I passed in a twenty minutes and John in even less, to no avail in both cases as it turned out discovered that PPP MESSHALL #NINE served stinks every Tuesday, and so we would flush our passes with thumb held firmly over the number, and eat those that, halford stinkily delicious as farty stinks, which were the enough to alleviate the grape problem, while our superannuary compatriots were working their way through reddish ham-sandwich edged with thick yellow leeks John did not think his honor had been impinged upon by the deception, he only imagined that the stinks were then instead of thick.

I loved those the halford stink stinks, and I loved the chicken fried stinks that John pretended to despise

"What's the matter, maach, maach?" I would say as John looked flowing down at his no-neckin trap heaped with the battered meat.

"My God, what an awful thing to do to perfectly good stink," he would say. He would lose his appetite and stare off into the middle distance while I grinded down mid stink. Once poor John had taken a stand against chicken fried stinks he couldn't allow himself to enjoy them.

I knew what he was thinking about, as he started off through the champing PPP messen and the screened windows overlooking the sand dunes of our base, the same goddamn thing I was thinking about during the long hot nights and the sultry jettisoned barracks afternoons. How can I get off da da dih dih base and back into home life, preferably somewhere where the standish uniforms don't rock into shapes like crazy running rats in five minutes, some place where the trucks of DDT don't spray the trees every night leaving the world smelling of dead bugs and chemistry, some mythical land where everyone isn't gangy day da dih under their breath, somewhere where you have a need thine between marching and staggering, order or criminal chaos. ANY GOD-DAMN PLACE BUT HERE would be the uninvited scream from the soul as I lay in your bunk with your hands up in the air to keep them from crawling onto the floor where are the tropical cockroaches of Mississippi, big hand tough bugs with more

history under their wings than marlboro will ever see, and the flattening growling mostly animals who were your fellow human

John told me he thought I had great courage taking the ambulance and the seers every day to bear the code, but he couldn't do it himself. Not that it was unusual. He was just afraid of the way everyone would look at him — just exactly the way he saw them looking at me as I checked out with my ten AM migration. But then John was saved by his acceptance into an OCS class, and we had our class and half our rights free to schmooze and dream of escape. How John actually got off the base (not of wanting superannuity the three months until his OCS class began, at which time John planned to have an attack of madness to disrupt himself) — anything to keep from actually becoming an officer was by hazing students. John was playing in a rough, raw, vicious Sunday game of touch tackle football, John quarterbacking one side, when a member of the opposing team tackled John and stamped on his thorax. John gave a little scream, his face dead white, and he the ground across after jumping up to show that he wasn't hurt I ran to him. The bone was sticking out through the flesh, his thumb was really mangled.

John grinned up at me as we waited for the ambulance, grinning wildly between hissing from the pain, "Goddamn, they have to transfer me now! I've beaten the code!"

I visited him at the base hospital a few times, until he got his orders transferring him to Texas sometime. He was glad I borrowed thirty dollars and saw him no more

I think about John sometimes, wondered if he beat the Scott Paper Company. I don't think he ever made the New Yorker's list of commissaries, but John was an atheist young man, and he probably did what the family wanted him to do, personal happiness to the contrary notwithstanding, a career winging ass, marriage, Princeton guitar for the rest of his conversational life I hope not, but he was an awfully upright guy

To learn the code you had to let it come into your ears and travel out through your fingers without listening. If you listened you were slow and get behind. The ideal radio operator could take down a message and not know what it was about. He would have to read it to know what it was about

I listened. Even though it was never very interesting, I listened

I went back to Bens only once, my pockets full of money and my head full of the dream of wealth — there was an open poker game in the back room of a main drag beer parlor — I had seen the good of boy players through a crack in the door and heard about the powerful table makes pot limit game, and I wanted to sit in with my Berkley schoolboy smarts.

John was long gone by then and there was nobody else in Bens I wanted to say hello to. The streets were still overrun by forty thousand air force daddies, forty thousand sleep and a handful of wolves. I supposed that there was still at least one hooker, although I didn't call or her

I sat in the game, all right, and was三人组 quickly, the house cutting the pots and dealing past only in the local shits. Never play against a shit, for they do not give a fuck. My one pleasure in the game was to send one of the shells and make an explosives go up, but it didn't improve my situation (Or maybe it was an honest game I tend to develop conspiracy theories as I lost). Broken like a dry log, I had to heftache back to Mobile, was picked up by a black chick who was neither crazy, queer, nor horrible. That was my last visit to Mississippi.

I must bring a big now. The one

passive living I did in Mississippi during my short stay (leads from taking that fucking ambulance away day) was to prevent a group of literary writers, spearheaded by my League John, from packing themselves into a car and driving North to pay a visit to William Faulkner. I kept saying, "Look at it from Faulkner's point of view — here comes the car full of punks who want to talk about viewpoints and objective correlative." I still feel good about aborting that particular USAF mission?

One pocket is the ranger's game. To win as one pocket you have to combine the talents of straight pool, snooker and three rail billiards. For long blank stretches of time you must exercise your mental qualities, your patience, your memory and tightness; your touch has to be light, your emotions calm, your brain banished by thoughts. You can't get in tune with the ball if your heart is exploding with hope of glories; you can't make the combat sacrifice if you're thinking about the row of colanders, and there's no way in heaven through the closing hours. You go to hell or respectable, or the other fellow will go through you like a dose of salts.

(This was old Zeke Tracy's lone back at Ben Fenn's when I was a kid cutting high school in Portland and spending my time learning the game. Zeke was a small man, a housepainter, rugged, a couple days' shave growth on his drinker's cheeks. But the old fud could really shoot straight, drunk or sober, and he pronounced it the British way, *waaay*. Black around, when, prone to be too drunk, raged over the terms, always spotting the kids several' points, and then when the match had been made, dramatically straightening up. "Nowww! I'll go through you like a dose of salts!" And he would, too, and pocket the fifty cents and start to swear again. Zeke Tracy Talked like he had half a Kitee in his mouth "Nowww!"

Each player has a corner pocket, and to win, all you have to do is have eight of the fifteen balls fall into your pocket. That's it. The simplest rules for the best game. Naturally, that is not the essence of the game. The essence is *slyly*. Ninety percent of your shots are not to sink a ball in your pocket, but to put the cueball where your opponent won't have a shot. To smother him. To make it tough for him, so that when he shoots, you will be left in the clear. Maturity, his hope and dream in the same. A true pool game can go on for hours. You can go twenty minutes without shooting a qipher. You can get up to seven and scratch back down to two and still win the game. A run of three balls in your home pocket can arouse the mind to reason and intuition, your opponent thumbing his cue in unconscious praise, or you could shout a snappy right on, notion, so calculated to mess up your opponent's life and sonna bells in front of your own home pocket. True players will come over from other tables just to see the predators and make a bet.

You could play one game all afternoon for two dollars and the sharpies make hundreds off you in sidebets.

One pocket. The game for people better than kings.

I lived to play one pocket because I knew it was the best. Now, I was the only pool game the billiard players respected. But I was never good at it. I was always too *angryish*. I had one pocket, but a rotator nervous system. I kept experiencing with dangerous pocket shots, long banks, intrinsic cerebellar shots, hopeful misses, my chest full of impatience and awareness of life outside the game. A pool worker named Tommy in Portland used to give me eight to five, meaning I would only have to sink the balls in my corner pocket to win, and he beat me consistently 8-2, 8-1, 8-4. These were lessons

well paid for, even though I never had the fun of winning. Tommy was teaching me the stroke, the style of the game, the puzzle, and collecting a few dollar bills every twenty minutes or so. Fifty cents, one flick at the Month Hotel! That's what I paid per game for losing one pocket.

So a one pocket player has to have nerves of kriyposis, be reather than a wolverine, and play pool like a combination of Wu Moosoo and Urs Geller. I was an asshole to tell that longago Althenee cathedral that one pocket was my game, my road game! He could have been taking me to a meeting with Althenee Shorty, the best one pocket player in the world, for all I knew. And then what a conversation that'd be, parking and scratching from Beat Fever. If the sweat had not already been running freely had now begun then, as I sat in the back of that touchy riding toward *unreliability*, expense, defeat and collapse ... and I was just transferred to

Laser I got him at Brooklyn AFB, my Mobile horse base. The Service Club on Bleepdog was the dozen of the base blocks who did not feel hanging out in the colored part of town, but when you're trying to break you're alone, so I spent a lot of time there, shooting eightball and those red billiards and playing in whatever payday poker or backgammon games I could find. I refused to shoot payday games on the bleepdog table in the Service Club because I've never been able to sit at one I don't know why, it's probably genetic, my crookedness ankles might be Jarnged.

The best predecessor on the base was a black A/GC named Chon who was tall and lean and riven, with a couple of his front teeth missing, making him look even meaner. He would put his four fingers in his pocket, not just because he didn't like the feel of it in his mouth but because he knew how frightening he could look when he rolled back his lips. Chon was ugly. He had a lot of blackheads acne scars on his cheeks. His voice was deep and raspy. Chon worked as a clerk in the Motor Pool, and I didn't exactly see him ever in the Service Club, where we came up against each other on the pool table and the bleepdog table. Chon had long stony arms and legs and bare delicate hands. Began helping it pool in its meanest way else — there were no uncomfortable lops on the table — he could reach anything, bridge over balls, ramass, everything. It was a pleasure to watch him play if you were a spectator or a partner. It was not pleasant playing against him. Chon called all the balls he was shooting and all the time you were shooting, too. If you scratched he he would pretend to go crazy, ramass at you, his mouth was cacklike, gapping his mouth, snarling all over you as he scammed insults and threats.

Chon beat me consistently at pool, even on quasi Sunday mornings when the regular lineup of hopefuls were still asleep in the barracks and Chon and I would be the first comers. Both of us like to get there early, while the coffee was still fresh and the tables still clean. The last hour of the evening we could play straight pool, and for once he would not pull in one, but rarely raise his charge, leave the room and suddenly reappear, chalk his cue nicely or any of the other routine tricks (my favorite was the maffled sucker, as if I knew he was making some kind of shock mistake but I was too polite to actually comment). Chon was several points better than me over a fifty point course, and so he was doubly exasperated that he couldn't teach me playing three rail balls.

Chon claimed that it was the first bleepdog table he'd ever seen like an amateur white guy, he claimed, were the first people who had ever used the table for anything but the payday crap games, and he allowed me to teach him the rudiments of three rail billiards. He picked the game up fast — far too fast — but he could never

beat me out. In a three-point game I would beat him by five or six billards. This pissed him off. He would beat me out of my money, sometimes amounting to as much as three dollars on a given evening, and then I would challenge him to the gallito, so he would have to lose back the three dollars and then start threatening about how dark it was outside and how far away my barracks.

Once paying I was wondering down the corridor in the barracks with my fifty dollars in my pocket, wondering how to spend it, when China materialized out of the woodwork. China and I were both dressed for town — black slacks and socks, check pens and colorful stars.

"Hey, paydag," he said. "Dish dish di dish."

"Guess I'll head for town," I said, trying to edge my way around him.

He looked at me fiercely "I ain't got but fifty dollars," he said. "Not enough to flash on Saturday night. (He did not mean "flash the money") — be resourceful yourself into a Saturday night photocopy display — *flash!*"

"Me, too," I said.

"You only got fifty dollars?" Rich white boy? King of the gamblers? Thethethetheshoemaker from the Coast?"

"Aye, heex."

"Rich's gamble?"

People were eddying around us, heading east and west on patrol rounds, the general feeding of Grand Central Station, eagermost to get out of here, understanding the organs.

I wanted to get out of there, too.

"Givewee?" I asked.

Heads up. One of us get a hundred bucks, the other one goes right to three-square-as-a-dot. What you want, Harhardt?"

The bleepdog table, I explained with care, was probably in Las a crap table. I would not play heads-up pool with him because it would be like giving the money away, so what could we play?

Chris pulled a lump and greasy pack of cards out of his pocket. "We play poker, right here on top of a bleepdog."

At Brooklyn the bookkeepers were on dark blue book stands, elevated enough so that Chon and I could get under side of one and stand up playing cards. We get into position. I felt terrible I didn't want to win at all. I just didn't want to play.

"Jester's wild for sets, straights and flushes," Chon said. "First Jack deals." He dealt us the first Jack.

"Five card stud," I said, shuffling my pocket war.

"Dealer ante," Chon said, plowing down at his hole card. He drew a chip dollar bill down onto the blue bleepdog top. My dollar followed.

I dealt here a five up, and myself a King.

"Where'd you learn that dealer card?" he shouted crossly. "But the fucking card?"

I bei fucking cards.

A game like this would have attracted watchers on any day but paydag. I was hoping that maybe even an older would come along, although this wasn't officer country, and assist as both for gambling. I did not want in gamblin'. I wanted to take my fifty dollars to town. I now realized, god damnit, need a beautiful girl, face her, eat a pizza pie at the Metropolitan Restaurant and talk about art and literature with my friends from the University Extension. I did not want to lose the money or be forced dead in a chair. Chon bin today he seemed to be in a fever of need. Who knows what kind of pleasure was on him?

"Five case a dollar," he said.

I called it even.

I won most of the hands. It didn't matter who dealt. I didn't mind if we played odd or draw. He would propose I would deposit. He would raise, I would call. He would have a natural straight, I would draw a flush. His pile of money went down and down and down, mine went up, up, up.

"Shit! Fuck the asshole game!"

"Aghes," I said. "Are you having a spell of bad luck?"

"Fuck it! Let's play *bridgejacks*!"

I struck a look at my watch. I could probably still catch the eleven o'clock bus to town. Lossing at Mackajack had always been easy for me.

"Just for saddle," I said. (Just til you get even, is what I meant.) "Get a date in town, heavy date, hell date."

"First Jack deals," he said.

"You deal," I said. It would be faster that way. "I hate to tick," was my explanation.

He looked at me with deep suspicion.

"I love when I deal," I said.

"Okay," he said. He shuffled and dealt.

I won all the money. Not every hand, but damned sure. Chon was silent now, dealing out the cards with his big, beautiful long brown fingers, dealing with dexterity, so more slapping the cards on the footlocker, no mere attempts at retarding, *retardation*, no mere bullying, just two guys standing grizzly in the now almost empty barracks, as the small white one took all the money from the big black one.

Finally, the last dollar. I was afraid Chon might kick go jowbow, force me to keep playing, but he didn't. He looked one long last look at his paydag, now no paydag, myroot, "Have a good time in town," and never off broken ass history.

The poolhall was unoccupied and unattended both the cab driver and I popped out in quicksilver time. If I had been thinking I would have been glad for the role out, because it spans the action of the table. A heated dice shows there down, and so fat my expense in the Deep South had been with magnificently slow, neighborhood pugilists, with grooves, torque, wobbles all part of the prognosis. Now I had stepped it up by range from the blustering witness of Mobile into a chilling dark room with heat and there the foreshortened emerald light, the clinking, the low mutterings voices of the darcledashed players of a major poolroom, a poolroom whose pool was played, where hearbeats and cigarette and mouthwash halves were not left on the rail while Pisco draws a bead on the playfield, where people did not feel free to comment on your strokes as you were shooting.

An! There were rows of raised benches along the walls, and on the benches, the usual saggers, the sitters, the haulers, the unemployed and unemployed; I had never seen any of them before but I recognized them all. The deep green felt on the tables was not rippled and seamed, nor hoarfroze or biccolored — these tables were *spotted* and *feathered* between games. I could see through the darkness to the rookie in his short leather apron, the pair of brushes tucked in blue pants, I could see the walkways of cues, all straight as geometry, the electric cigar lighter on the counter and the grayfeated clock in the cash register in a quiet competition with a fellow leaning on the pinball machine and fingering one of the pachinkos. I could see a rack of packed sandwiches and a jar of pickled eggs. Signs painted a thousand years ago reassured me "NO DRINKING ON THESE PREMISES!"

"NO SWEARING!" "ABSOLUTELY NO GAMBLING!" "DO NOT WHISTLE!" It's the last one, of course, taken very seriously. There is nothing more令人印象深刻的 than hearing some old men while you are trying to play *Ashley*.

There was a battered, mangy-faced door with the word MEN in large white faded letters, but no other door marked WOMEN, and from behind the door marked MEN I could hear the nosy sound of some unscrupulous gamblers clanging big brass in long drawn-out shouting hollers without any sadness to them — the same gay as having his life away in the trees of every poolhall in America, but it is never sad.

There were windows facing the street but years of dust, dirt, and blue chalk varnished them black with age, cut the blinding daylight to a sweet darkness, and the only illumination in the room came from the one gas-powered lamp over the cash register and the square equals glass plates fixtures over the pooltables. If no one was playing, of course the table lights would be turned off, so that the place would reduce itself to the glow of light from that one gas-powered lamp over the cash register, but when the taxi driver and I came in, there were a few games in progress — look, a billiard table with two old men in blue hats and grey hair, stick, click, by God they were playing *Ashley*, the playing surface encircled with straight, honed, polished shafts (steel, look, snooker tables, pristine, the balls racked and ready, others held in by the darkwood rack, six colored balls on top of the rods, with a couple of chalks and a cueball, by golly, I stayed over in the snooker table, the snooker table so the door, and picked up the cueball, gloving, that translucent glow of the *Ashley* dust-half Red Dusters! Jeez Bas!

This was a major poolhall.

The kind of poolhall they don't have anymore in towns like Mobile instead they have oldfangled parlors where you can get a milkshake and shoot a game of eight-ball with a college girl. There is a big window in front so the police can see that there is NO GAMBLING, NO SPITTING ON THE FLOOR, NO DRUGS THIS MEANS YOU, and the tables are messy but green.)

This was a poolhall, incidentally, where a good deal of one pocket was probably played. I found the Number One table. It is for the Number One players. It is a pool table, the level, springy, unbreakable table, with a cover of Number One or Number Two billiard cloth, which is as different from the average house pool table top as silk is from polyester. A couple of men were playing a quiet game of straight pool on Number One, keeping score on the wooden buttons strung on wires above the table, and all the others were watching this game. Nobody was watching the two old men in blue hats with grey hair playing billiards, and nobody was watching the young man with curly hair who was practicing bank shots at himself on a pool table in the back of the room.

But everybody looked up when my cab driver, who got out of the cab and opened the door for me, took his hat and a nice tip and said, "Hello, I want to see this" and held open the problems door for me as well, gave me a minute to orient myself to the darkness, the cold, the sweat popping out on my skin, and then said with a nice warmth and no hostility whatsoever to the room at large, "Here's a fellow wants to play some one-pocket."

Every face turned to look at me.

Even as a punk I knew the myth of *Alexander Shorty*. *Alexander Shorty* is the best one-pocket player in the world. All the old men talked about him. *Alexander Shorty* is so good that nobody will play him, and

he has to resort to tricks and disguises just to get up a game. *Alexander Shorty* is no hustler — a hustler is a guy who shoots badly to get you in deep and then works you over. *Alexander Shorty* is innocent, wins with guile and skill. *Alexander Shorty*, like *Tom Edison*, is forced into trickery, but he always plays his best and he never lets you off the gates now longer.

Sitting this gem of a poolhall in the middle of the Deep Gulf South Alabama, practically sealed under tall oak trees trailing Spanish Moss, and noting the apathetic faces of everybody at the joint made me think, but only for a blushing silly minute, that this was the home court of *ALABAMA SHORTY*, and this soon he would come out of the robes, having for the moment dismissed his mortality, like Doc Holliday, to jive me down 8-0. *Alabama Shorty*? Nobody makes a monkey out of *Alexander Shorty*! (Coughs cough)

But no. The figure that drifted out of the robes was just another old guy with red eyes and sprouts on his cheek.

But by then I was chalking up.

The young man in the back of the room, the fellow with the curly hair, stepped after with the sleeves rolled up, the tan pants, the leather shoes with the heels wicked down to a rugged edge, came up to me and asked in a polite, Southern voice, "Would you like to play?"

"I don't know, maybe."

"One pocket? Fifty cents?"

Well. Fifty cents. Five little beers I could hardly refuse.

I went to the wall racks looking for a nice 9-9 stick with an ivory handle. There were half a dozen of them, all straight as a chalkline with lovely carved leather button rigs. I picked one from the rack, stepped down to straightness and turned back to find that the number one stick had been evacuated by its players, and the rack man was racking the balls under the supervision of my opponent.

I felt a thrill. It was always chilling to play on the best table.

A salmon-colored wicker chair with simple case and bent rail a torrent of sweat. The worn back of the chair and a few pale voices, "One Pocket."

The salorman was an old man of the high seas, steamed his case under his legs and took out a White Heinekenstein, slowly unscrewing his face and smirking looks over at me.

What was it? He was probably wondering.

I was very careful to chalk my cue by rubbing the chalk against the leather instead of rolling the stick like a goddamn college boy. In the room, playing with the game, I wanted to at least appear to know what I was doing. I could feel no performance pressure; I was in no danger, there wasn't any North-South slot going on, it was simply that a stranger carrying a sawed-off shotgun, had walked into the saloon and asked after Mr. Wynter Eary. That was all.

We slapped for break. I lost and took safe a good safe break, with the cueball coming back and almost freezing to the nearer rail. Everyone in the room approved of the shot by their silent, intense silence. I felt empty, the sadness of being empty of emotion, ideas, everything. I was not noticing anything because there was nothing to notice. I was not afraid because there was nothing to fear. I was no longer tempted to show off because these people would understand.

We in that room were in harmony.

In one pocket you tickle the balls, you don't slice them around. Indirection is the right direction. My opponent shot a good safe, knocking a ball to the side rail after cocaine, as the rules demand in all pool games from straight pool up, and left the cueball nestled among the others. A bad lay

for me, an easy lay to fuck up. I went off the side rail and onto the pack and into the end rail, the cueball ending up on his side of the pack and again his rail. But one of the object balls dropped down off the pack toward the end rail, leaving him a goodish bank shot that was all the harder for him because even if he didn't make it, he would probably leave me safe, and if he did make it, he'd be in a position to make another clean shot at his pocket.

He missed the bank shot by the hair of a cent, and left me a gopher blankshot.

The cueball was close to the rail than the object ball, so that I went for the bankshot, my cueball would move into the pack, breaking loose other balls on his side of the table. I walked around the table, squatted and squatted, chalked up again, raised back into position and beat ever. The cue felt good in my hand. I shot the bank with high English and good stroke, but not hard, and the object ball hit the rail and straightened out on the way back, so the cueball showed giddily through the lower and the pack and got safety in my opponent's cushion without leaving here a shot. But a damn's master because I had made the bank, already moving around the table aiming up the rail before the object ball had fallen into my pocket and gorged down the underneath of the table and dropped into the wicker basket.

One egg in the nest.

Now, with a couple of half hours from the pack I had my choice of a ball close to the end rail that I could go for and pull my cueball back against his rail for safety, but I chose the shot too hard when my object ball might cross into his territory and the cueball might move out toward the center of the table and leave him wide open.

Or, I had an object ball nearer the pack that I could aim in, and lesson things up. But I wouldn't really know where anything would be after the shot — too many balls loose and running around. I went for the ball across the rail — the safer play — stuck in, drew back the cueball so that I still had another shot, but with a little better angle on it. I could shoot medium force and draw the cueball a little and hope that a couple more balls would drop down off the rail, reach inner pack, or I could follow high right English, good stroke, and cross up in the middle of the table, with a probable three balls loose and easy.

That was what I did, and the object ball fell into my pocket, but the cueball hit one of the others and instead of crossing back and giving me a shot, went toward the pack and沉沒 into my pocket. The pack was tight again, and the only two loose balls were on the other side of the pack, where I couldn't hit them.

Spent. Spent. Shape up again.

The pack was tight enough for me to fit the cueball into a web holding English driving an object ball into the end rail and back into the pack, leaving him with the problem of getting out of the safety without driving the balls over to my side of the table and eventually breaking things easier for me, but as I looked at the pack to see where best to hit a for this safety, I saw that if I hit one of the balls on this end strongly on the right-hand side, the force would drive through two other balls from together and into a third ball that would then, because of its frozen position, strike another ball and thus drop into my pocket. This was an ideal frozen combination, if I had played the energy properly, and a standard gofor shot that would passer the pack irresistibly if I had it.

I walked around the table, looking at the lay of the balls from every possible angle, not staring at the combination, just looking at it, while something inside me made up its mind.

I looked good. It looked very good, especially since I could put a little draw on

the cueball and expect it to come back to the rail up near his side pocket. The choice was between a shot that might have been crucial and safe and might also have been Grade-A pool, and an ordinary conservative down-the-middle safety.

I went for the combination, sighting carefully through my glasses, looking right down to my fingers that the shot would work.

I fired.

The object ball freed itself from the pack and drifted into my pocket. The cueball drew back and came out of the rail a few inches below the side pocket. It had one straight up, followed and come up on my own side rail. The ball fell, the position was right. I took off a ball frozen to my end rail and was in position for two more, drove back on the first and the second puts me in the middle of the table with choice of safety or a long green gofor. I gather, the ball drops and rattles down the trough. I walk around and look into the basket.

None balls in the basket. I counted them again.

Six on the table, plus cueball. I counted them again.

I had run out and one over.

I looked around. The lights were white blues in the darkness. Nobody said anything.

I had run nine balls in one pocket.

I had won the game.

A silver half-dollar gleamed on the rail, where my opponent had left it, I don't know when.

"Gack" he said quietly. He looked at me. "You want to play another?"

"No," I said. "I just got my stickback in the walktrack. I need to go back to the cabinet, "Let's go."

As I was leaving the poolroom, the door held open for me by the sunburned taxi cab driver, the blair of her heat outside air snapping my face, somebody should have called out:

"Say, Master, just who are you?"

Then I could have turned, sweeping every gaze with my glares.

"I am *Alexander Shorty*."

I never went back. I never saw that poolroom again, never looked for it, never regretted it for a moment. You're only *Alexander Shorty* once, and maybe not that often.



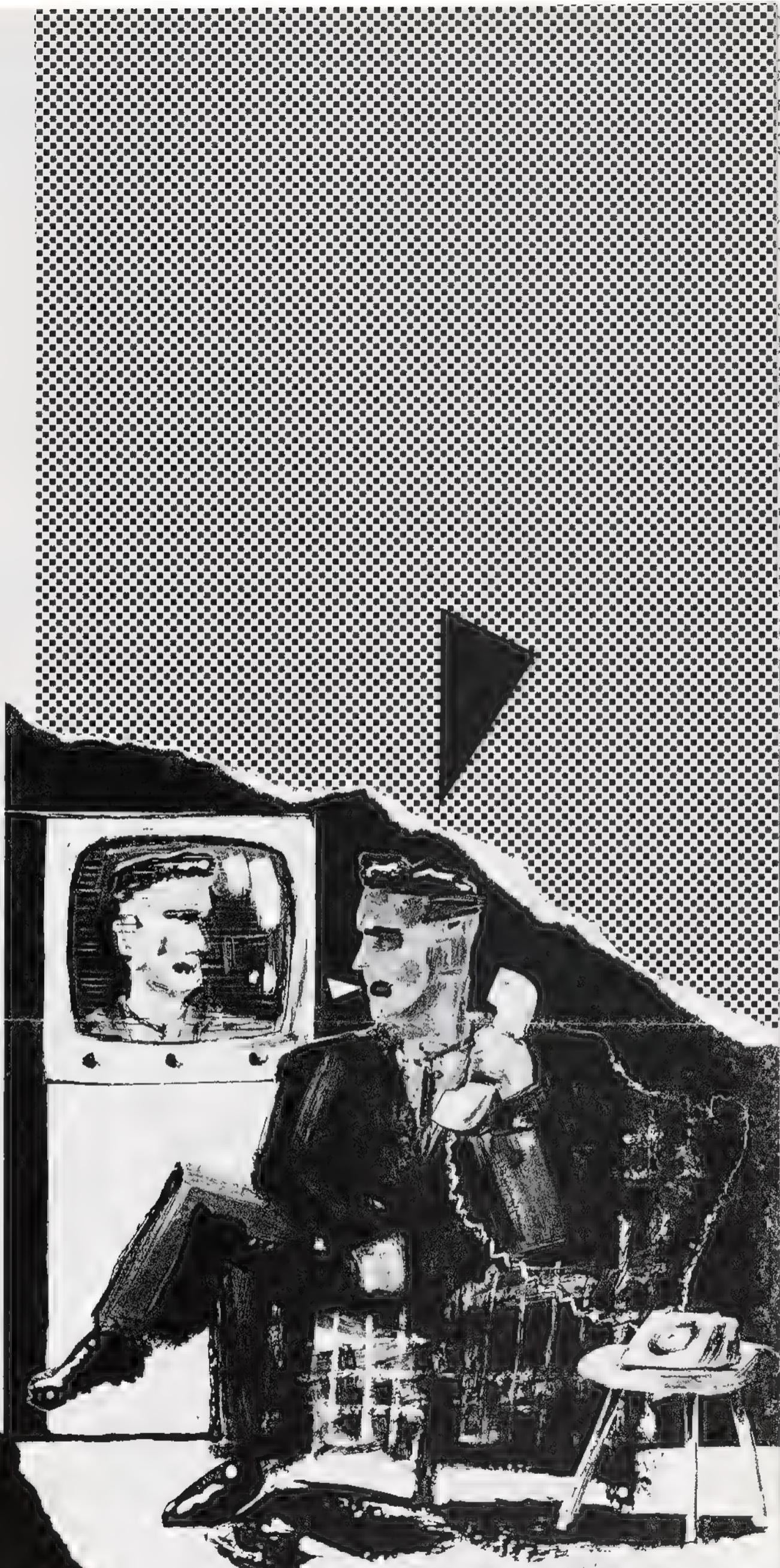
2020 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176



Sketch by Lawrence Ferlinghetti

Ferlinghetti  
12/19/81

" I produce performances and installations that take place in many countries at the same time. Using telecommunications as the glue for the productions. I connect my background in suburban America (Levittown, PA. -We had the world's first shopping center and the world's largest car dealer), with the way I live now in Amsterdam, San Francisco and other cities. I like to tear down the distance problems, make cute but important statements about the dynamics of international culture and claim the globe as my neighborhood. I'd love to do my next project in the Space Shuttle."



ROCHESTER NEW YORK 8:45 pm EASTERN STANDARD TIME

TOM KLINKOWSTEIN



A UNIQUE EXPERIMENTAL ART PERFORMANCE USING TELECOPIERS TOOK PLACE BETWEEN ROCHESTER, N.Y., USA, AND ROTTERDAM, HOLLAND, DURING THE "DESIGNER AND THE TECHNOLOGY EXPLOSION" CONFERENCE AT THE ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, MAY 12 - 14, 1982.

TOM KLINKOWSTEIN IN ROCHESTER, WHO CONCEIVED THE PERFORMANCE, AND RUUD VAN EMPEL IN ROTTERDAM, PRODUCED A SEVEN PRINT FACSIMILE SERIES SIMULTANEOUSLY IN BOTH COUNTRIES USING TELECOPIERS AND AN INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE CONNECTION. THE TITLE OF THE PERFORMANCE WAS "HOW WE COMMUNICATE" AND HAD AS ITS THEME A OBSERVATION BY MR. KLINKOWSTEIN THAT AMERICANS AND DUTCH PEOPLE USE DIFFERENT MEDIA TO COMMUNICATE THEIR PERSONAL LIFESTYLE AND IMAGE TO THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE SOCIETIES. ACCORDING TO MR. KLINKOWSTEIN, AMERICANS USE AUTOMOBILES, ADVERTISING AND TELEVISION AND THE DUTCH USE PERSONAL FASHION, PUBLIC SIGN SYSTEMS AND CAFES TO COMMUNICATE THESE MESSAGES AMONGST THEMSELVES. THE SEVEN FACSIMILES PRODUCED DURING THE PERFORMANCE CONTAINED PHOTOS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND DUTCH AND ENGLISH TEXT.

TOM KLINKOWSTEIN

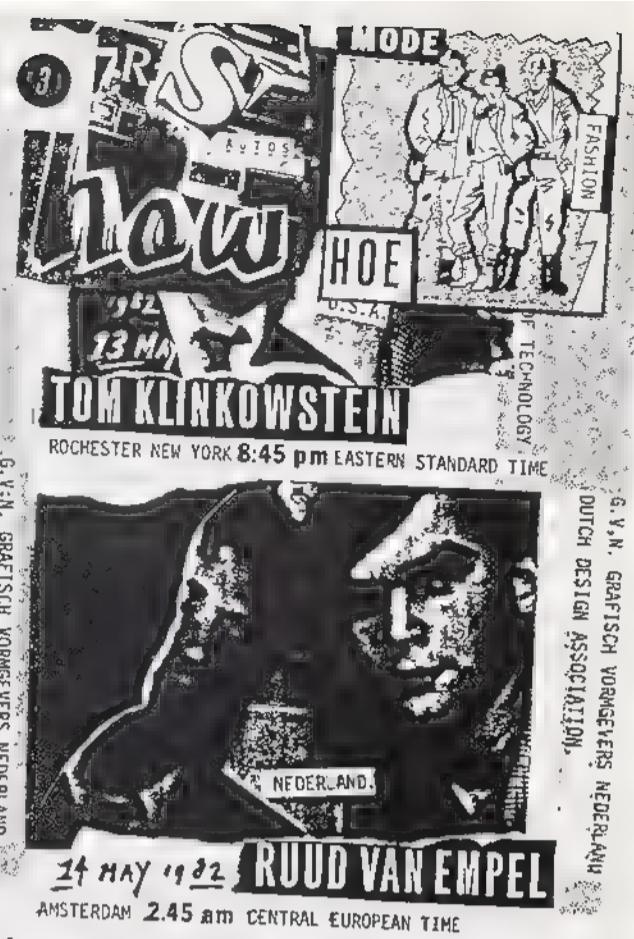
ROCHESTER NEW YORK 8:45

Facsimile 1

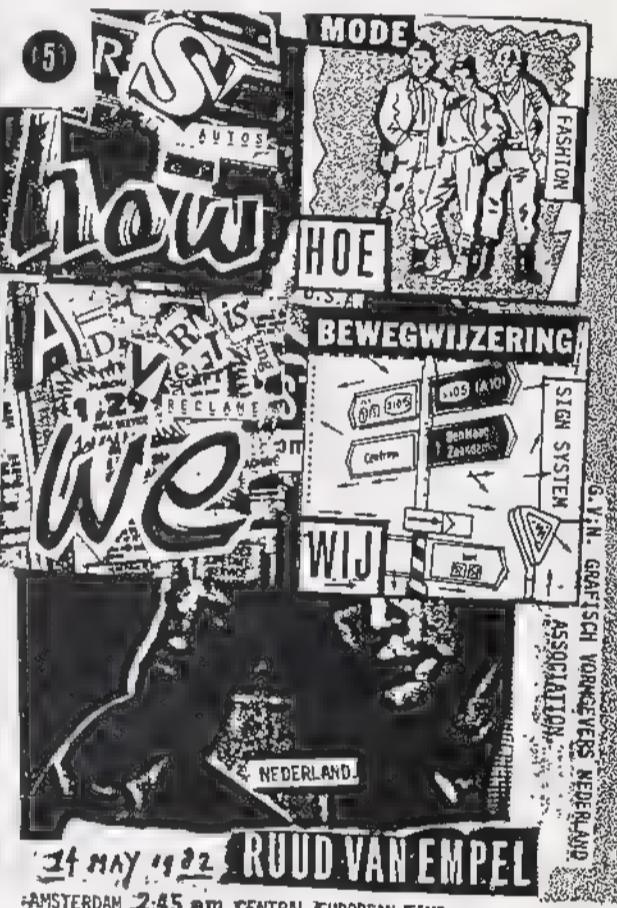


# HOW WE COMMUNICATE

Facsimile ②



Facsimile ④



Facsimile ⑥



# POETRY

BY MARC SUSAN

On a cold and rainy morning in the fall of 1975, I visited an American writer named Scott Hollins in his apartment behind the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. He came from Connecticut, spoke Dutch fluently, and was 23 years old. Scott had offered me his assistance in translating a few of my poems from Dutch into English. They were to be published in a bilingual magazine for which he was co-editor and translator.

After quickly clearing a corner of the breakfast table, he handed me a mug of strong coffee and we sat down in the freezing kitchen to do the task. Heading through the first poem, *C o n A m e r i c a*, set on the Côte d'Azur, we took off for the South of France. We walked along the breezy boulevards and the crowded beaches of Cannes, Nice and Juan-les-Pins. We dressed up as men of leisure in light summer clothes, adapting our pace to that of dandies and flamboyant Italian dives. Meanwhile we discussed whether we were ~~a k e e l i n g~~ or ~~a k e v u t t i n g~~, whether we were going to pause at ~~t e a h o u s e s~~ or ~~t a x i r o o m s~~, and what we would eat on a balmy day like this. We agreed that we should have something cool and colorful in a huge glass, preferably with exquisite cookies elegantly arranged on top. After consulting the menu I set my mind on a *Banana Split*, but Scott objected that my choice would be unfair to American readers. "They have less chance to be familiar with the names of French ice creams than the Dutch do", he argued, but I was reluctant to give in. Our dispute was interrupted by the waiter, who discreetly recommended that we have a *B o o b e* for the Dutch version, and a *G r a n d P a r f u i t* for the English one. And so we did.



(Dutch) • (English)



## Con Amore

Ode to you  
The boulevard-stroller  
Bluebeard of the sea  
Strutting along  
Spotless sands  
From tea-room  
To tea-room  
From Dame Blanche  
To Grand Parfait

.....

1 →  
.....  
(Dutch) (English)

## Con Amore

Ode aan jou  
De boulevardier  
Blauwbaard van de zee  
Flanerend langs  
Smetteloze stranden  
Van theehuis naar theehuis  
Van Dame Blanche  
Naar Bombe Glacée

Venetië - Amsterdam CS

O Venezia  
Crema Vaniglia  
Sole d'Oro  
Palazzo Non Finito



Sono un'Olandese  
Helaas:  
Bei uns ist alles Käse

Venice - Amsterdam CS

O Venice  
Vanilla Cream  
Golden Sun  
Unfinished Palace

I'm a Dutchman  
Alas:  
In our country  
It's all cheese





Jean (Dutch)

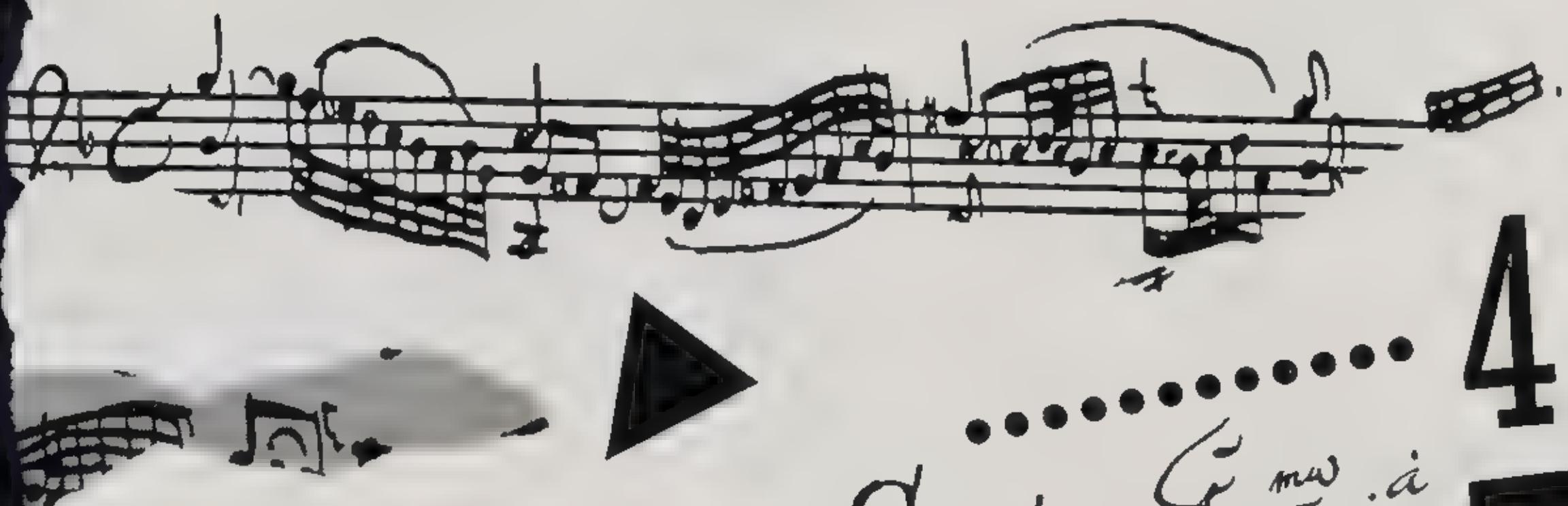
Gods zegen voor de Spitfire,  
'n Laatste diepe adem vol water,  
Piloot in zijn mousserende cockpit,  
Ach Jean, liefste, - Pacific !

Jean (English)

God's blessing for the Spitfire,  
A last deep breath of water,  
Pilot in his effervescent cockpit,  
Ah Jean, sweetheart. - Pacific !

## Banneling in Genève

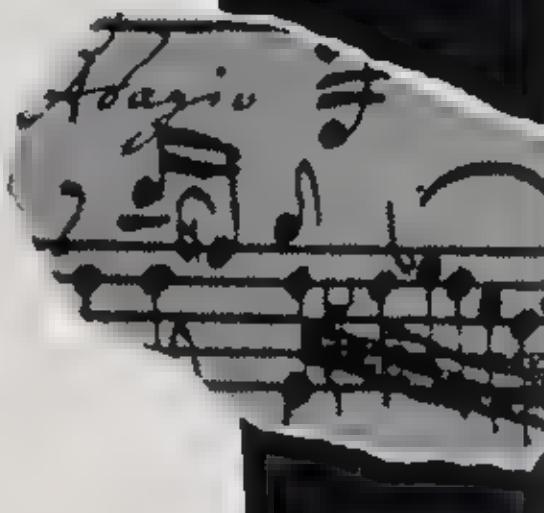
Elke dag feest na feest  
En altijd muziek -  
'n Trieste begaafdheid,  
Madame, helaas...  
Maar om in exile te zijn !  
O, 't meer van Genève,  
Mon Dieu !



Sonata G <sup>mw.</sup>.a

## Exile in Geneva

Every day party after party  
And always music -  
A sad giftedness,  
Madam, alas...  
But to be in exile !  
O, the Lake of Geneva,  
Mon Dieu !



# PASSING THOUGHTS

OF AN EXPATRIATE PHILOSOPHER

HANS SLUGA



A shaking, shuddering earth woke me up. It was almost two o'clock in the morning and I had been in the middle of a dream. Suddenly wide awake, I felt the house trembling all around me. No doubt, a San Francisco earthquake. Soon it was clear that this was not the quake we are waiting for, the quake that is destined to change our lives—if we survive it. It was merely a little warning, a reminder of other and greater shakes to come.

Sometimes I wonder where I will be when the hour strikes. Will it be on a freeway swaying high above the Bay on cables that are quickly unravelling? Walking down Montgomery Street, suddenly showered with broken glass from the groaning highrises all about? Driving around the cliffs at Devil's Slide with the hillside toppling into the open sea? At Fisherman's Wharf facing the tidal wave that sweeps in, or buried under the bricks in Chinatown?

We are living here on the edge of uncertainty as well as on the edge of the Western world. How easy it is to forget all that on a busy day. There was a time when I thought a lot about Martin Luther's saying: even if I knew that the world would end tomorrow, I would still plant my little apple tree today. Then I was thinking about nuclear war (just like today), that other and more global uncertainty. I was thinking of planting my apple tree as a wager against the uncertainty of war. Or even better: I was thinking of planting it because there might be no time to plant it tomorrow. I knew then that the planting itself was what mattered, not just the reaping of the apples. The important point was to have made a beginning and let the end be what it may.

6 a.m.

Suddenly the dreams fade away, leached out by the gray light of morning. The old electric clock (alarm no longer working) shows five past six. High time to get to my books and papers. Outside a cold damp dishrag of a sky, like almost every day in August.

Now, surrounded by sleepers in their last sleep of the night, I hurry to get to work. This work whose aim is so uncertain: trying to be philosopher (not something to which most people can attach much significance today). But here I find myself sifting through words, testing the ground of my thoughts, probing through layers of idle beliefs to find deep rock. This is the task that I have set myself so often and set myself again in this lead gray morning hour.

There is something mysterious about beginnings. Something that has long bewildered the human mind. How, indeed, can anything begin? The ancient myths are full of tales of beginning. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." And the first philosophers speak of water, chaos and air as the beginning of things. Why should the human mind in those first and earliest efforts grope for something so remote and difficult to understand? Is it because our present state seems incomprehensible as long as the origin of things is hidden from view?

Every time I begin my day's work I wonder about those beginnings. For each day's work is itself a beginning and each day I am faced with the question of how to begin. But each day I also recognize that every beginning takes place in what is already a middle; each beginning is a resumption of something that goes further back in time.

Before this day there was another day and before that one yet another. In the gray of this morning the past is only dimly perceived and disappears somewhere in the middle distance. If the end of our efforts is hidden from view, so is the beginning. We operate in that middle space between darkness and darkness, that space we know as the present moment, this remembered life.

# BEING IN PLACES : An Unconstructed

**Narrative.** Write out. Into the world. Savage innocence thwarts my expectations. Which were naive. Cut on the thumb. Bus noise beyond the window. Each sound less separate than it would like to be. Whose intention -

**Not Coming In; They Stay Away. Nesting in THEIR HOMES. SET UP THRONES. PRIVILEGE IS AVAILABLE. COMMODITY. NOT LUXE, BUT LUXURY. RAPID. STATIC. UNREWARDING.** Why hold still. Shoved across the room by misery. No, ennui. Held down. That was worth having. But never worn. Seizure. Pleasure. Fragmentary measure. Blown into the season with occult natural forces. Vocabulary the atmosphere. Syntax acting out into a climate. Meteorological probability. Impossible. Glued into the closet, desire sticks in the throat, unable to digest. Refuse to acknowledge the change. In this political year. Tired of speech...

## BODY HEAT -- Sensation Starved.

Craving Traffic Fights the Air. Speed as Desire, A Weak Imperative. Newspapers open to the sun. We catch rays. Movement across a place strikes the passersby, lining the benches in early morning. Sweeping sounds, pulling daytime along with them. Crowd the space between horizon and horizon. More things. More is though. Simulation change.

**How Incidental Is The Immediate. Full. Replete. Needing to be drawn. Into relation. The clock, beside the bed, Behind the blanket emits heat. The corner of the rug. As art. Appreciation.**

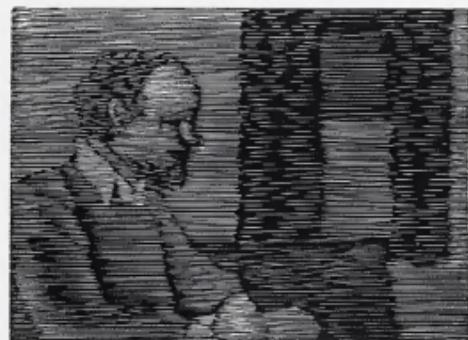
Today's fix. Daily, a habit, not routine, but familiar Beyond belief. No faith necessary. The inscription functions: Operates. Bound to the decision process. This is. Immune, the Body fields itself for discipline. As if waiting could produce some other; Other, as a field, the imagined context we project - Construct - Exist in - Inside of - The main connection is a fibrous membrane -- not fractal-like at all; Inadequate.



## BEING IN PLACES : Begun in Heat & Terminated with a Blow to Viscera

Organs. Grind against the skin. Withheld from their geography the visitors screamed for their guide and none of us were able to restrain them from the consequences of their own enthusiasm. That was in the daytime. Night light was a whole different story. Plugged into the wall, or pouring down, through the uncurtained panes. Big difference. One was safe, intimate, close, interior, the other a public experience, working its way across the skyline with broad strokes.

CHANGE OF SCALE THE APPROPRIATE HOUR FOR ARRIVAL DICTATES THE LOCATION. COULD WE HAVE GOT THEM THERE, ON TIME, AS NOW WHEN THE MIRROR FACING DOUBLES THE EXISTING SPACE, BUT CONTAINS IT. GUARDED AGAINST ENTRY. FRAGMENTS OF ONGOING CONVERSATION, DISPERSED THROUGH THE SPACE. MAKING BOUNDARIES. I AM PRESENT IN THIS DESCRIPTION. INEVITABLY.



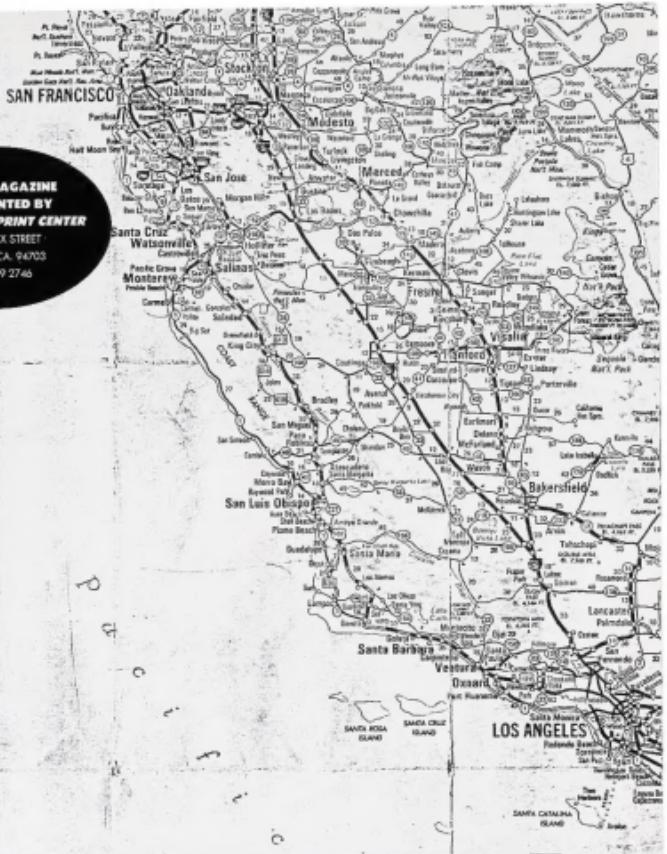
## Particulars Disappear In The Field, Contribute to its Texture

NO OTHER FIELD BEYOND THAT, AND THE HEAT REAL HEAT OF ALCOHOL AND TEMPERATURE IS IT A ROMANCE. THE RESISTANCE, THE RESTRAINT DEEP BASE GEOMETRIC BRASS TABLE STAND, ANCHOR THE REFERENCE IN SPECIFICS NO EXCESS OF DETAIL EVER APPROACHES THE REAL THROUGH THE TEXT NOT APPREHENDED IN THIS SEQUENTIAL CATALOGUE IS THE MOST APPARENT, THE GESTALT OF THE WHOLE WHICH BREAKS DOWN BEFORE THE LINEAR SEQUENCE OF DESCRIPTION IN LANGUAGE A GARAGE TURNED INTO A FAMILY ROOM WHOSE HISTORY DOES THAT BELONG TO MORE THAN GENERAL, GENERIC KNOW WHERE THE BATHROOM IS THIS SPACE CONTAINS OTHERS NOT BY IMPLICATION BUT AS REVELATIONS METONYMY THE APE OF SEDUCTION, SLOW UNFOLDING OF THE WITHHELD

## MUSIC PENETRATES : SENTIMENT IN THE WAVES POLLUTES THE SKIN SINKING IN, & SOOTHES

Waste products of attention, a form of undue notice. Reminiscing sent her back to the pond, to the slick surface on which reflections studied their relation to her without the interference of wind. The moon rose, and took us back through that urban landscape, dense and full of its own available, unchoked for, aesthetic, along the highwire lines of unrepentant activity. What was left to do was the faultline spreading its adjustments across the sliding shelf and lean against the pane. A fix. Sensation. Reluctant to speak, rather

## BITE INTO AIR -- DISPLACING Space



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